Our January theme of Art and Artists was designed to increase the children’s awareness of the different kinds of art and the artists that create it. We introduced the theme by reading the book To Be An Artist by Maya Ajmera and John D. Ivanko. This book explores what it can mean to be an artist and the ways that children around the globe express themselves through art, including drawing, making music, dancing and acting. Photos of children from dozens of nations accompany the text. We introduced several famous artists and their genre of art in Circle Time using Artist Cards (showing a portrait of the artist and one of his or her famous pieces of art), fiction and non-fiction books, and demonstrations of the technique or style that the artist used. For this unit, we have focused primarily on Visual Arts. In the classroom, the teachers planned hands-on activities to explore the styles and techniques of several of the world’s greatest artists. We began our study learning about lines. Lines have names that describe their place in space. They may be horizontal, vertical or diagonal. Lines may be thick or thin, solid or broken. When two lines sit next to each other they become parallel lines. Piet Mondrian, who used lines to create blocks of color, and Jackson Pollack, who created splats and lines by throwing paint on a canvas, were two of the focus artists this week. We continued to learn that lines can be bent into curves, swirls and squiggles and broken into angles to make shapes. The focus artist was Henri Matisse, who made his art images by strategically placing cut paper shapes. The next step was adding the more complex ideas of using color, and tinting and shading of color to create art. Focus artists included impressionists Mary Cassatt, born in Pittsburgh and famous for her images of women and children; Edgar Degas, who often painted dancers; and Claude Monet, painter of natural settings and especially gardens. The final week of the unit added vocabulary and experiences with form, space and texture. Featured artists included Vincent Van Gogh (impasto textured paint technique), Tiffany (stained glass) and Andy Warhol (pop art). Each art process focused on the style of the artist. Perhaps getting to know great artists and the artists in ourselves has inspired the children to carry art in their hearts as they grow and develop.
We are all artists!
Some of our favorite Art and Artist activities and projects!

Line

Grace splatters splotches and lines of paint on to a canvas in the style of Jackson Pollack.

Kiana and Liam use masking tape to divide sections for painting. After they paint, the tape will be removed to create Mondrian-style lines and blocks of color.

Melynda builds with Window Blocks that are made of straight and curved lines.

Shahrzad walks in a straight line on the balance beam.

Gabrielle makes horizontal and vertical line designs with cut paper.

John practices cutting on straight and curved lines.
Aaron decorates the Green Room Art Studio with Matisse style paper cutouts.

Kayla works on a paper cutout shape pattern.

Ali stretches a Shape Shifter with his body to make a diamond.

Anna and Elena glue shapes to their wood sculptures.

Pax and Clara play Color Shape Bingo.

Benjamin creates lines and shapes with rubber bands on the Geoboards.
A group of friends make Monet style garden pictures with rolled tissue paper.

Mintaek is making shades of green by adding dark colors to his paint.

Tiernan is tinting his paint by adding white paint.

Lili experiments with colored tubes and marbles in the Discovery area.

Alex uses an eye dropper to squeeze colored water on coffee filters to make a mixed color design.

Kouta builds with several multi-colored materials on the light table.
Form, Space and Texture

Asher, Mack and Will pose in front of their tall and strong block structure.

Lynn and Maya shape their dough for a cinnamon bread snack.

Isaac feels the bumpy texture of a mushroom sculpture found on a campus walk.

Noah creates his own version of Vincent Van Gogh’s The Starry Night.

Sasha puts her own style into an Andy Warhol Tomato Soup can.

Neve makes a self portrait out of found scraps of material, yarn, clay, and rick rack.
Friends move their bodies and play with color using the White Light Machines.

Jingcheng practices getting the nail in straight on the hammering log.

Clara uses black sharpie marker, cellophane and glue to create her own Tiffany style “stained glass.”

Friends work together to glue items brought from home onto the Junk Train.

Jacob weaves paper strips over and under a paper frame.

Zen works on figuring out how to attach long pieces of wood to his sculpture.
Annette draws with Mirror Crayons.

Giovanni adds water color paint to his apple sketch.

Maddie sketches figures with the Smelly Markers.

Megumi and Yu share their original drawings.

Friends feel the carved letters on an ice sculpture created by an artist visiting CMU’s campus.

Younghoon takes a close look at the new classroom pets: 5 Paradise Gourami fish.

Roland and Perry cooperate as teammates while playing Connect Four.
Campus Connections

Noah and Paul pose with the statue that stands next to the Walk To The Sky sculpture on the Carnegie Mellon campus.

Birthdays

Grace, Annette, Roland and Thomas all celebrated birthdays in the classroom. Their families joined them for birthday snacks and stories.
Visiting Early Childhood Education Students from Duksung Women’s University, Seoul, South Korea

Ms. Grace Yong reads a Korean Folk Tale and makes Coasters with traditional Korean Paper called Hanji.

Ms. Hyun Joo Kim plays a Korean Jacks game called Gongi and chats with a friend on the playground.

Special Visitors

Listening To Great Stories

Benjamin’s mom and Aaron’s mom read books to the afternoon class.